



OIDAC Europe

October 2026

Monthly Analysis









1. Summary

During October 2026, the Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians in Europe (OIDAC Europe) recorded **33 violent incidents against Christian individuals, religious symbols and places of worship**. All occurred within the European Union. The highest number was recorded in France (11), followed by Germany and Italy (9 each), Spain (3) and Austria (1).

The recorded incidents comprised **14 cases of vandalism, 9 desecrations, 3 arson-related attacks, 2 physical-violence incidents,** 2 disruptions, 1 case of vandalism combined with violence, 1 theft targeting a religious object and 1 attempted intrusion.

The most serious incidents included the assault on Catholic men singing hymns in Rouen, stone-throwing at a parishioner in Cuneo, deliberate fires at churches in Ploubalay and Voghera, an alleged attempted arson in Die, the destruction of a tabernacle in Albi and projectile damage to church windows in Étevaux. A parishioner in Ploubalay was hospitalised after inhaling smoke while trying to extinguish the a church arson.

Beyond these 33 incidents, OIDAC Europe documented 60 further incidents or identifiable affected sites, predominantly involving thefts, attempted thefts and break-ins. These included 11 thefts targeting religious objects, as well as property damage, graffiti and five fires whose causes remained undetermined. A further deliberately lit fire had no established anti-Christian motive. These cases are not included in the anti-Christian hate-crime total.

2. Trends: Repeated Church Attacks and Desecrations

With 33 incidents, October was slightly above September (30), but remained below the totals recorded in most earlier months of 2026. **Vandalism** was again the most common offence, accounting for 14 cases. A particularly striking development was the damage to **five different churches in Leipzig** over several days. The repeated targeting of places of worship in the same city raised concerns about the security of churches. One of the affected churches had previously experienced repeated attacks on its café, reportedly by left-wing extremist groups.

Incidents included **9 desecrations**, more than twice than **the previous month**. Several involved tabernacles and consecrated hosts, including incidents in France, Italy and Spain. In Spain, the Archdiocese of Granada urged priests to take additional precautions to protect the Blessed Sacrament ahead of Halloween, following a police warning about a possible attempt at desecration. Concerns about links to occult practices were expressed locally. Furthermore, **3 arson-related attacks** were recorded.

October also saw **2 incidents of physical violence**. These included an assault on Catholic men singing hymns in Rouen, which left several injured.

3. Incidents by Countries

France

France recorded **11 quantified incidents**: 3 desecrations, 3 vandalism incidents, 2 arson-related attacks, 1 physical assault, 1 projectile attack classified as vandalism combined with violence and 1 attempted intrusion.

In Rouen, a group of Catholic men was attacked after singing hymns near the Saint-Romain fair; resulting in several sustained injuries, including an eye-socket fracture, and death threats. In Ploubalay, two fires were set during one attack inside Saint-Pierre-et-Saint-Paul Church. In Die, a man was arrested on suspicion of attempted damage by fire.

In Albi, intruders destroyed a tabernacle and damaged a statue. At Camphin-en-Carembault and Chemy, two churches were broken into and their tabernacles forced open. Projectiles damaged five stained-glass windows in Étevaux. Further vandalism affected the cemetery in Ansac-sur-Vienne, a Marian statue in Porto-Vecchio and Saint-Hilaire Church in Soullans. Approximately thirty graves in Ansac were vandalised in a single cemetery attack.

In the context of the protests, a priest prevented a group from entering a church in Ivry-sur-Seine. Separately, Cardinal Jean-Marc Aveline reported churches forced open in Marseille.

13 additional incidents, which were not classified as anti-Christian, included thefts, property damage and a church-roof fire in Toulouse whose cause remained under investigation.

Germany

9 incidents were recorded in Germany, including 7 vandalism incidents, 1 desecration and 1 disruption. Five church suffered attacks at distinct addresses between 21 and 25 October, in Leipzig. One of the affected churches had previously experienced repeated attacks on its café, which its operators attributed to left-wing extremist groups. Further vandalism involved the removal of a Christ figure from a roadside cross in Bocholt and the alteration of a Christian cross on a church poster into a swastika in Nettlingen.

In Düsseldorf, a holy-water font was deliberately smeared with excrement in sacramental profanation, and access to the church was subsequently restricted. In Trier, a man released crickets inside the cathedral, causing disruption and the temporary closure of a chapel.

19 further incidents or identifiable affected sites, including numerous thefts of copper, cash and other valuables, thefts of Nativity figures in Grünhain and a chalice in Triftern, as well as break-ins and property damage. A small fire in Rimpar remained under investigation. Separately, an intoxicated man in Passau set religious materials alight and was reportedly admitted to a psychiatric hospital; the circumstances did not establish an anti-Christian bias motive.

Italy

In Italy, a total of 9 incidents were recorded, including 3 desecrations, 3 vandalism incidents, 1 physical-violence incident, 1 arson-related attack and 1 theft targeting a religious object.

A report from Cuneo described stone-throwing at a parishioner alongside repeated damage and intimidation. In Voghera, a deliberately lit fire destroyed the organ at San Rocco Church and forced its closure on a Sunday.

Desecrations affected Termini Imerese, where consecrated hosts were scattered across the altar, Alfonsine, Corsano and the hospital chapel in Urbino. Vandalism affected Marian statues in Bagno a Ripoli and Gardone Val Trompia, while an "obscene" graffiti in Quinzano d'Oglio led to reduced church opening hours and a Marian statue was torn down and thrown into a ravine on Croda Granda.

14 additional records, which were not classified as anti-Christian incidents, concerned thefts, break-ins and graffiti affecting Italian churches.

Spain

3 quantified incidents were recorded in Spain. Desecrations took place in Parla and Nigrán; in Madrid "Allahu Akbar" was graffitied on the Church of Saint Ignatius of Loyola.

A circular communicated to priests in Granada before Halloween, urged them to strengthen security and avoid leaving the Blessed Sacrament in infrequently visited churches.

Austria

One disruption was recorded in Vienna. Teenagers interrupted a Catholic service by shouting "Allahu Akbar" from the entrance before fleeing. The priest requested that his name and parish remain private for safety reasons, but mentioned similar reports from other parishes, which had not become public.

Further EU Context and Supplementary Records

In Greece, the Mount Taygetos chapel reporting severe damage. A report published on 21 October described significant progress in repairs to the roof and door, additional supports and rubbish removal by military personnel and volunteers.

Other supplementary records concerned Poland (4 records), Romania (2), Belgium (1), Ireland (1), Lithuania (1) and Sweden (1). They included damage to an outdoor altar in Gietrzwałd, a fire of unknown cause in Râmnicu Sărat, a sacristy fire in Meulebeke, and a deliberately ignited board in Vilnius with unestablished religious bias.

4. Conclusion

October was marked by repeated attacks on churches and Christian symbols, together with a rise in desecrations involving tabernacles and consecrated hosts. The **five attacks on different churches in Leipzig** were particularly notable, especially as one of the affected churches had previously experienced a series of 26 attacks on its café, reportedly perpetrated by left-wing extremist groups. These repeated attacks highlight the vulnerability of Christian institutions to politically motivated targeting and the need for effective measures to protect places of worship and prevent further violence.

Serious **violence targeting** a group of Catholics **in Rouen** and a parishioner in Cuneo showed that the incidents were not confined to damage to property. Deliberate fires in France and Italy also endangered those present and disrupted worship.

Repeated vandalism and desecration continued to affect the daily life of Christian communities. In several locations, churches **restricted opening hours** or temporarily closed, while dioceses organised acts of reparation or **advised parishes to strengthen security.** Such measures illustrate how attacks on religious sites can affect access to worship even after the immediate damage has been repaired.

Numerous further thefts, break-ins and fires affected churches across Europe. Although the available evidence did not establish an anti-Christian motive in these cases, they added to the financial losses and security challenges faced by religious communities. The distinction between these offences and hate crimes remains important when assessing the nature and scale of the problem.

The documented cases represent only those cases, which have been identified by OIDAC Europe at the time of reporting and **do not constitute a full account**. They do, however, demonstrate the importance of considering both the frequency and the gravity of attacks against Christian individuals, communities and places of worship.